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ABSTRACT

Bilingualism and bilingual education in the U.S.S.R., the People's Republic of China, and Canada are discussed as a context for examining American attitudes toward and the establishment of bilingual education programs. Russian and minority languages in the Soviet Union are examined, including the early development of Soviet language policy, language policy under Stalin, and language policy from Krushchev to the present. An exploration of Chinese language policy looks at the situation of Chinese national minorities, language policy in Communist China, and education in the context of the Four Modernizations. Discussion of Canadian language policy focuses on the history of language in that country, the "quiet revolution" in Quebec, and the pedagogical dimensions of bilingual education. Against this background, the following conclusions are stated: (1) the United States attempts at bilingual education have been motivated more by political imperatives than educational reasons; (2) bilingual education is not a new concept, but one that has a long history; and (3) we can learn a great deal about what succeeds and what does not by looking at these and other countries' experiences. (MSE)

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Bilingual Education Policy: An International Perspective

by
Edward R. Beauchamp

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EDWARD R. BEAUCHAMP

Edward R. Beauchamp is professor of education at the University of Hawaii, where he teaches history of education and comparative education. A specialist on education in Northeast Asia (Japan, China, Korea, and the Soviet Far East), he has taught and lectured at universities and research institutes throughout the region as well as in Europe, Southeast Asia, and Oceania.

His most recent publications include *Educational Policies in Crisis: Japanese and American Perceptions* (1985), which he co-edited with William Cummings, Victor Kobayashi, et al., and *Dissertations in the History of Education* (1984). He has also contributed a chapter on education to the forthcoming *Democracy in Japan*, edited by Takeshi Ikeda and Ellis Krauss.

Beauchamp's research interests include the American occupation of Japan, the role of American teachers in nineteenth century East Asia, and contemporary education reform efforts in Japan, Korea, and the United States. He is author of fastback 171 *Education in Contemporary Japan*.

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Introduction

Americans tend to view their experience with bilingual education as unique. However, the issues surrounding bilingualism and minority languages are worldwide and have been with us since ancient times. E. Glynn Lewis has argued that "Bilingualism has rarely been absent from important levels of the intellectual and cultural life of Europe, and nearly all European languages have had long and, in some instances, several successive periods of language contact. Bilingualism has been and is nearer to the normal situation than most people are willing to believe." We might learn a great deal from these experiences.

Greek and Latin were dominant languages in the ancient world, and many people learned them in order to communicate beyond their own language group and to conduct trade. Latin later became the language of the Roman Catholic Church and of the educated classes of medieval Europe. It was not until the rise of nationalism during the Renaissance that national languages took on spiritual and particularist characteristics, eventually linking language with political nationalism.

Today in many parts of Africa and Asia, bilingualism is the norm. A large percentage of the world's population is bilingual. In fact, it is very difficult to find a country that is truly monolingual.

Even in such a homogeneous and supposedly "monolingual" country as Japan, bilingualism is neither uncommon nor new. Historically Chinese held a position of prestige in Japan, similar to that of Latin in the West. In the Meiji period of rapid modernization, English, German, and French were widely viewed as useful tools for economic, political, and military development. To-

day it is estimated that Japan has at least 150,000 English-speaking businessmen working in other countries, and their children also become bilingual as a result of living overseas. In addition, the ability to read English and a grammatical knowledge of English is necessary to pass the entrance examinations to the better universities in Japan. Another American element contributing to bilingualism in Japan is the Armed Forces Radio and Television Network, which is easily available to interested Japanese. The Atlanta-based Cable News Network also has made inroads in Japan, and a wide variety of English-language newspapers and periodicals is found throughout Japan.

Japan also has had experience with trying to impose its language on other groups. Before World War II, Japan forced the subject peoples of Korea, Taiwan, and Micronesia to speak Japanese. During World War II, similar attempts were made in Southeast Asia; and plans for the expected occupation of Hawaii included making Japanese the official language. Today there exists in Japan several relatively small but important minority groups. Of these, the indigenous Ainu, especially the young generation, have been linguistically and culturally integrated into Japanese society. However, the Korean and Chinese minorities, brought to Japan before World War II to augment the work force, lead a functionally segregated existence and maintain their culture and language. In fact, both the South Korean and North Korean governments subsidize Korean schools in Japan.

Another often-overlooked minority in Japan is composed of well-educated and sophisticated Americans and Europeans who live and work in Japan. Most are transient, and relatively few bother to learn more than a modicum of Japanese. They essentially are cut off from the dominant language of the community, but a significant number of them make their living as foreign language teachers.

The United States also has had a long experience with bilingualism and bilingual education. Bilingual education in the United States has been with us since the earliest days of our republic. It was common practice for wealthy families to have their children learn a second language, usually French or German, through tutors or by sending them to study in Europe. Many *lycee* or *gymnasia* were established in America for this specific practice.

Americans were not unique in their desire to have their children speak a second language. In pre-Revolutionary Russia, among the aristocracy the ability to speak French was widely acknowledged as the hallmark of the cultured

person. Even today, in most former colonies, the socioeconomic advantage associated with speaking English in India, Dutch in Indonesia, or French in West Africa is widely conceded.

English has never been the only language spoken in America. The legacy of French-speaking settlers in Louisiana and Spanish speakers in the Southwest is apparent today. In the late eighteenth century, about 225,000 German speakers constituted the largest non-English group in the colonies. Most of these German speakers settled in Pennsylvania, constituting about one-third of the colony's population in 1775. The use of German was so widespread in Pennsylvania that Benjamin Franklin asked, "why should the [German] boors be suffered to swarm in our settlements and, by herding together, establish their language and manners to the exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of *aliens*, who will shortly be so numerous as to germanize us instead of our anglifying them?"

Before the Civil War, many of the laws establishing public education made no mention of language. In the 1830s, for example, German-language schools were common in Pennsylvania; and in the 1840s Ohio approved a bilingual English-German system of schools in Cincinnati. However, toward the end of the nineteenth century and during the first half of the twentieth century, the overriding political spirit was that of "Americanization"; you could not be a true American if you spoke in a language other than English. As part of this trend, Wisconsin and Illinois passed laws making English the only legal medium of instruction in public schools; and the increasingly influential Irish in the U.S. Catholic hierarchy pressured German parochial schools to use English.

World War I was a milestone for the "Americanization" and "speak English" advocates. During the hysteria and patriotism that swept the country after our declaration of war in 1917, many states banned German in the schools, and other states banned all foreign language instruction. However, in 1923 the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Meyer* v. *Nebraska* and related decisions, struck down as unconstitutional many of the laws restricting foreign language teaching.

By the onset of World War II, most of the major linguistic minorities in the U.S. had been integrated into the dominant English-speaking society. The Japanese-American was, of course, an exception to this generalization. After World War II, however, the country began a slow, painful shift from assimilation to cultural pluralism. Immigration laws were changed, and by 1964 had

eliminated the quota system that gave preferential treatment to immigrants from English-speaking and northwestern European countries.

The landmark Bilingual Education Act of 1968 offered, for the first time in our history, federal financial support for projects that would meet "the special educational needs of the large number of children of limited English-speaking ability in the United States." This piece of legislation has been followed by a series of legislative initiatives, court cases, academic studies, public debate, and not a little political rhetoric. The post-1968 history of these events is well documented and will not be repeated here.

A political rationale lies behind virtually every form of education, but it is especially evident in the controversies surrounding bilingual education. Bilingual education is more than just learning another language, it also involves the redistribution of power. As Jerome Bruner suggested in his 1969 *Saturday Review* article, "A theory of instruction is a political theory in the proper sense that it derives from the consensus concerning the distribution of power within society – who shall be educated and to fulfill what roles." It follows, then, that although arguments favoring bilingual education invariably talk about preserving the culture and literary traditions of speakers of minority languages, and it *may* accomplish that goal, it is fundamentally redressing political and economic power between the haves and the have-nots. Thus, one of the major reasons why the dominant group in a country usually refuses to learn the languages of its minorities is simply the reluctance to grant prestige or status to these languages and, by extension, to those who speak them. Therefore, in most societies bilingual education really means that the minority group learns the dominant group's language, which is functionally the language of economic and political power within the society.

The bilingual education issue is an old one within the American context, and it also is a common issue in most countries of the world. It may be useful for all of us to step back from the heated rhetoric of our current situation and look at bilingualism and bilingual education historically and comparatively. While a "long" and a "broad" view of the problem may not present us with solutions, we at least will begin to see what has and has not worked.

Russian and Minority Languages in the Soviet Union

It is common for Americans to use the terms Russia, the U.S.S.R., and the Soviet Union interchangeably when talking about that country. However, the Soviet Union is a multinational state comprising approximately 130 ethnic groups, speaking at least that many languages. While it is correct to use the Soviet Union or the U.S.S.R. as the name of the country, references to Russia more accurately refer to the largest and most important of the 15 republics that constitute the Soviet Union. The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) covers a vast land area, stretching from Leningrad on the Baltic to Vladivostok on the Pacific.

The most recent census (1979) indicates that native Russian speakers constitute 52.4% of the total population (down from 53.7% in 1970). Ukrainians constitute the second largest linguistic group, 16.9% of the total population; and the third largest group, Uzbeks, constitute only 3.8% of the population. However, projections indicate that by the year 2000 ethnic Russians will constitute only 46% to 47% of the total population. Recent Soviet figures dramatically illustrate the situation by showing that the current ethnic Russian birth rate is 14.2 per 1,000, while in Uzbekistan it is 32.7 per 1,000, in Tadzhikistan it is 34.7 per 1,000, in Turkmenistan it is 34.3 per 1,000, in Kirghizia it is 30.1 per 1,000, and so on. Suprisingly, the problem is exacerbated by higher death rates per thousand in the European republics of Russia (8.5), Ukraine (8.6), Latvia (11.1), Lithuania (8.7), and Estonia (11.3) as compared to the more "backward" regions of Uzbekistan (5.9), Tadzhikistan (6.1), Turkmenistan (7.0), and Kirghizia (7.5). In these circumstances the language question takes on great significance to Soviet leaders.

Because of demographic changes in the population resulting in a decline of Slavic Russians and a very large increase in the population of such places as Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and other predominantly Muslim regions, the Soviets are faced with the prospect of filling the ranks of the armed forces with ever greater numbers of non-Russians who have little or no ability in Russian. A 1982 Rand Corporation study suggests that the Red Army could face difficult times in a crisis because anywhere from 20% to 25% of all combat units are composed of non-Russian troops. The Central Intelligence Agency reports that they can "envisage combat-related scenarios in which ethnic or racial riots, minority conflicts with local populations, or even mutiny based on ethnic grievances could become real possibilities."

There is no official *de jure* language in the U.S.S.R. All languages spoken in the country are considered to be co-equal before the law and, according to Article 159 of the Soviet Constitution, may be used by citizens in all official proceedings. In practice, however, the Russian language *functions* as the official language of the Soviet Union. Although the constitutions of several republics proclaim various indigenous languages as "official" languages, the fact is that Russian is the language used in the day-to-day activities of the party, government, military, etc. The lack of a good command of Russian is a serious handicap in any field. In fact, one close student of the subject, Michael Rywkin, writes that "No important career can be pursued, no technical breakthrough recorded, no important decision implemented in another language. . . . All other languages play only limited political and social roles and approximate the importance of Russian only in cultural and social fields, and this within the borders of their respective union republics and never throughout the USSR." The Soviet ideal would be for everyone to be competent in Russian, in addition to at least the mother tongue of the republic in which they reside; but that happy state is a long way from being achieved.

Bilingualism in the Soviet Union, although widespread, has never reached the levels that it has in such countries as Tanzania (90%) or even Paraguay (55%). In the Soviet Union, the percentage of bilingual speakers varies, depending on language groups, from a low of 1% to 3% among Russians and Estonians to about 40% among Kurds and Slovaks. Speakers of major languages in the Soviet Union usually do not bother to learn a second language other than Russian, and Russians themselves are notorious for their unwill-

ingness to learn the language of the regions to which they emigrate within the Soviet Union.

In early January 1984 the Central Committee of the Politburo of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) unveiled draft legislation that would significantly reform the country's education system. One of the most important proposed changes would make it the official policy of the Soviet Union that all children, regardless of national origin or mother tongue, master the Russian language by the time that they leave high school. Perhaps no other action can more eloquently highlight the multinational character of the Soviet Union and suggest some of the problems facing it in the area of language policy in general and bilingual education in particular. To understand these problems, their historical development must be understood.

The Early Development of Soviet Language Policy

The language problems of the Soviet Union have their roots in those of the earlier Russian empire. In the century before the 1917 Revolution, the complicated web of tensions generated by the multinational Russian Empire, composed of scores of peoples speaking different languages, practicing different religions, and springing from different ethnic and historical sources, posed a dangerous force that threatened to pull the empire apart. Although a limited amount of linguistic autonomy was permitted in the Russian parts of Poland, Finland, and the Baltic provinces, Russian was the official language of the empire. In general, languages other than Russian had no legal rights whatsoever and, indeed, were actively discouraged if not forbidden, as Ukrainian was forbidden between 1876 and 1905.

Russian was the prerequisite to social mobility; if one wanted to better oneself, the only way to do so was by assimilating with the Russian majority. The government's goal was to engineer a "fusion with the Russian people." This unequivocal czarist policy was precisely stated in 1824 by Minister of Public Instruction Admiral Alexander S. Shishkov when he declared that "the education of all people throughout our whole empire, notwithstanding diversity of creed or language, shall be in Russian." According to his biographer, during Stalin's youth as a seminary student in his native Georgia (1884-1899), "Russification was the order of the day. Not only was Russian enforced as

the regular seminary language, but it was forbidden to read Georgian literature and newspapers" (Tucker 1973).

The Bolsheviks, seeking to gain support in their quest to overthrow the czar, offered a radically different alternative to Russia's minorities. As early as 1903 Lenin argued for the right of a population to receive an education in its own language, and in 1913 he expressed the Bolshevik view that "guaranteeing the rights of a national minority is inseparably linked with the principle of complete equality." It is clear that Lenin's theoretical position of "complete equality" was exactly that; he stressed the absolute equality of languages no matter how small the number of speakers the language had or how inadequate for life in modern society the language might be. In addition, he made no special provision for Russian and, indeed, insisted that under no circumstances should Russian be made a state language or be a compulsory subject in a non-Russian school.

From 1917 to the mid-1930s Soviet language policy can best be characterized as conciliatory and pragmatic. Language policy favored a pluralist approach in which national languages would be used in all aspects of life, especially in education. On 31 October 1918, less than a year after the 1917 Revolution, the new People's Commissariat of Education decreed that all national minorities had the right to instruction in their own language in all schools and universities, and even the right to maintain separate public schools. Any talk of the superiority of Russian culture or language was dismissed as an attempt to establish domination. In 1921 several linguistic institutes were established to create alphabets for people with nonwritten languages, and 52 new and 16 newly reformed alphabets were developed. During the 1920s it was Russians who were to be bilingual if they lived in a non-Russian republic.

This policy resulted in mother tongues gaining strength as languages of instruction in Soviet schools. For example, Iakut became a language of instruction in 1922, as did Moldavian and Ossetian in 1924. Peoples with well-developed written languages, such as the Georgians, Armenians, and Tatars, introduced their mother tongues into higher education in the 1920s. In addition, an ambitious publishing program in national languages was launched in 1918. In 1924 textbooks in 25 different languages had been published; by 1931 textbooks were published in 76 languages.

However, the encouragement of national languages always has been subordinated to the political goals of the Soviet authorities, particularly as they re-

late to the larger "nationalities problem." The flowering of national cultures or nationalist sentiments consistently has been viewed as a threat to the political integrity of the Soviet state. Therefore, it is not surprising that since the Revolution there has existed a tension between those who advocate a relatively liberal approach to the teaching of national languages and those who insist on a centralized position that often resembles the "Russification" efforts of czarist times.

Language Policy Under Stalin

Joseph Stalin's early views on language policy were not only based on Lenin's theories but also on his opposition to any talk of a special status for the Russian language. He claimed that "those who advocate one common language within the borders of the U.S.S.R. are in essence striving to restore the privileges of the formerly predominant language, namely the Great Russian language." Stalin equated the aspirations of national minorities with language, perhaps best expressed in his formula: "national in form, socialist in content," with the "form" being language. Indeed, language planning under Stalin extended to large numbers of non-Russian languages. By 1934 textbooks were published in 104 languages, and shortly thereafter more than 70 different languages served as the medium of instruction in Soviet schools. However, despite these early gains, the Stalin era is characterized by a swing away from linguistic pluralism toward a more traditional centralization.

The intensification of Stalin's "Cult of Personality" in the late 1930s was paralleled by a revival of nationalism that thrust Russian culture and language into a more central position in Soviet life. A 1938 decree changed the legal status of the Russian language, making it compulsory in all Soviet schools. This reversal of Leninist principles, which were supported by Stalin until 1938, was probably precipitated by the success of Lenin's policy. The Russian language's position in the country had been seriously weakened – in fact, by 1938 many national schools did not even offer Russian as a subject. In addition, the literacy of non-Russians in Russian had fallen far below the levels of czarist times, a development that worried Stalin. Also, as the shadows of war lengthened across Europe in the last years of the decade, separatist tendencies among some nationalities posed a threat to the Soviet state. Establishing Russian as the dominant language was a means to counter this trend.

In his famous "victory toast" at the end of the war, Stalin proclaimed the Great Russian people as "the most outstanding nation. . .the leading force of the Soviet Union." The Russian language was thereafter viewed as the "language of socialism," and Moscow's language policy seemed to take on some of the flavor of czarist "Russification" policies. The bloody and often indiscriminate purges of Stalin's last years eliminated many of the intelligentsia of national groups, thus further weakening national languages.

Language Policy from Khrushchev to the Present

The emergence of Nikita Khrushchev as First Secretary in 1953 marked still another phase in the development of Soviet bilingual policy. Khrushchev's claim of communism's rapidly approaching dominance called into question the "national in form, socialist in content" formula that had served as a theoretical base for bilingualism since the 1920s. Deprived of that base, national languages were weakened at the same time that Russian was being put forth as the language of inter-ethnic communication.

Khrushchev's initiatives, expressed in his education reform laws of 1958-1959, repealed Stalin's 1938 edict that made Russian compulsory in all schools. However, this action did not deprive the Russian language of its privileged position; in fact, it was a major blow to the well-being of the non-Russian languages. Although ostensibly restoring language equality ("Instruction in the Soviet school is conducted in the native language."), the operative section of the law replaced the phrase "native language" with the less precise "any language of free choice." The reality facing parents, of course, put "free choice" in a specific context. Facility in the Russian language is the key to upward economic and social mobility; and Soviet parents, like most parents, want to provide the best opportunities for their children.

Another argument used to de-emphasize the minority languages was that Soviet children were overloaded with language study to the detriment of other areas of the curriculum, such as science. In the nationality schools children studied three languages – their native tongue, Russian, and one other foreign language. Therefore, in order to lighten the language load, a "most democratic procedure" would be to allow parents to decide which language their child should study as a required subject.

Khrushchev's policies represented a turning point in Soviet bilingual policy. Russian was now *the* language for "consolidating [a] new community of peoples." The Soviets had come a long way from Lenin's position of defending the language rights of minority groups.

After Khrushchev's removal from power in 1964, his successors' approach to minority language problems and bilingualism was essentially a combination of Stalin's and Khrushchev's ideas, although lip service continued to be given to Lenin's "principles." Leonid Brezhnev accepted Khrushchev's declaration that the Soviet nationality problem had been "solved" and that a unity of peoples sharing Russian as a common language was an objective reality. To this Brezhnev added his own version of Stalin's "victory toast." He not only claimed that the Russian language is the language of science and technology and the medium of communication and cultural exchange among different nationalities, but Brezhnev also endowed the Russian language with what one student of the Soviet Union refers to as an almost "mystical" quality. He saw Russian not only as a neutral instrument of communication among peoples but as containing in its essence "the message of Communism." The practical significance of this position is that it suggests that other national languages are inadequate for transmitting the fundamental ideological truths of communism. Ironically, it is the same argument that was used in czarist times by the Orthodox Church regarding its religious teachings.

Any examination of events since the late 1950s must conclude that the Soviet authorities have vigorously promoted what they describe as "one of the most-developed languages in the world." This has resulted in the shift in many minority language schools to Russian as a medium of instruction, with the goal of graduating people with a mastery and love of the Russian language.

On 13 October 1978 the nation's Council of Ministers adopted a decree, in secret, "On Measures for Further Improving the Study and Teaching of the Russian Language in the Union Republics." In May 1979 more than a thousand educators and policymakers met in Tashkent for an all-Union scientific conference on "The Russian Language – The Language of Friendship and Cooperation of the People's of the U.S.S.R."

Thus we see an abandonment of the traditional Soviet pedagogical theory that held that one should not begin teaching Russian until the second or third grade, that is, after the child has reached a certain level of proficiency in his mother tongue. Russian is now introduced in the first grade in all republics.

In fact, Russian has even been introduced on an experimental basis in pre-schools and kindergartens in several republics, most notably in Uzbekistan and Georgia.

Rhetoric to the contrary, Lenin's emphasis on the language rights of minority groups has been discarded; and an attempt to use Russian as a vehicle for greater national integration has resulted in a decline in mother tongues and, by implication, bilingualism. Perhaps the major lesson to be learned from the Soviet experience is that if a nation decides to pursue a policy of bilingual education, it had better make sure that the program will not suffer at the hands of political expediency. This is a lesson that may be lost on American educators.

Language Policy in the People's Republic of China

Education and language policy are never formulated in a political vacuum, and any discussion of these policies in the People's Republic of China (PRC) must recognize the special role played by political ideology in all educational questions. Language and ethnicity are especially sensitive topics in the PRC; and although Westerners tend to think of the Chinese as a homogeneous people, all of whom speak "Chinese," the situation is far more complicated. In fact, concern over national minorities is as old as Chinese history.

Chinese National Minorities

The history of Imperial China's attitudes and policies toward minority peoples is a complex and interesting one, but cannot be recounted here. However, the actions of China's rulers were not designed to advance the interests of the minority peoples. The overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty (1644-1911) in the years preceding World War I ushered in the Republican Era (1911-1949), characterized by vacillating policies toward minorities and their languages. For example, an early promise of self-determination was replaced by a series of centrist policies, all of which tended to promote assimilation into the majority Han culture and language.

The question of what constitutes a national minority in contemporary China has been answered in several different ways since "liberation" in 1949. At that time more than 400 groups claimed national minority status, and the number recognized by the government has fluctuated over the past 35 years. Today the number of officially recognized national minorities is 56. In China

national minorities are not defined by racial characteristics but by cultural traits, including customs, religion, economic way of life, and language. China's national minorities range in size from a few hundred Hoche on the northeast border along the Heilung Kiang River to more than 10 million Zhuang in Guangxi Province. In addition, at least a dozen groups claim more than a million members, and Chinese researchers have identified more than 50 distinct ethno-linguistic groups. China's national minorities vary in sophistication from the advanced Korean group in Kirin, which boasts almost universal literacy, to the primitive Wa people of Yunnan, who until recently believed that "their crops would not grow unless fertilized each year with the head of a Han [the majority national group]."

According to preliminary analyses of 1980 census figures, there are more than 67 million people who belong to national minorities, which equals a little more than 6% of the population. The dominant Han peoples constitute the remainder. Because non-Han peoples make up only about 1/16th of the total population, one might conclude that China's minority problem is not a particularly serious one. However, the problem is more complex because of where these minority populations are located.

A basic geopolitical fact about China is that its frontiers are among the longest in the world. These remote and often sensitive border regions contain the vast bulk of the nation's minority peoples. In fact, China's frontiers divide such important non-Han minorities as Mongols, Uighurs, and Kazakhs from their ethnic brothers and sisters living in Mongolia and the Soviet Union. In addition, T'ai, Shan, and many other groups straddle China's borders with Burma, Laos, and Vietnam. Perhaps the most strategically significant minority region is Xinjiang Province, the site of China's nuclear weapons testing and research at Lop Nor, which is contiguous with the Soviet Union and India. China's security problem in Xinjiang was demonstrated in the summer of 1962 when more than 50,000 discontented Kazakhs fled across the border into Soviet Kazakhstan

Another element in PRC leadership's concern over these border regions is that, although sparsely populated, they represent more than 60% of China's land area and contain rich, often untapped natural resources needed in the current development efforts. Also important is the leadership's sensitivity to the ideology of the revolution, which posits that under socialist development,

China is destined to be a single, fraternal amalgamation of diverse peoples living as a single harmonious family.

Marxist thought categorizes ethnic national consciousness as a manifestation of bourgeois society that eventually will disappear in the face of communist internationalism and the economic self-interest of the various ethnic and linguistic groups. Since this historical process takes time, Marxism recognizes the political necessity of recognizing, albeit temporarily, the right to self-determination of minority groups. However, whether self-determination means national sovereignty or autonomy within a larger federation of peoples is a matter of interpretation.

Language Policy in Communist China

In the early years of its existence, the Chinese Communist Party adopted Lenin's dictum that national minorities should have the right to secede and form their own nations, but it is the responsibility of the Party to consolidate larger units under its rule while working hard to diminish any desire for secession. In fact, the 1931 Qianxi Soviet Constitution reaffirmed the right of a minority group to "complete separation from China and the right of an independent state for each minority nationality." By the mid-1930s, however, the Party's emphasis shifted to building a strong, unitary, multinational socialist state capable of protecting itself from foreign enemies. In this circumstance the right of secession was reinterpreted as too dangerous and was replaced by the concept of regional autonomy within the centralized state. Since that time the Party's policy has oscillated between cultural pluralism, national autonomy, and assimilation.

In the first years of communist rule after 1949, Mao and his supporters appealed to the nation's minority peoples for support. They set out to be moderate and accommodating whenever possible, pursuing policies designed to win favor with the minorities. Five autonomous regions for major minority groups were established in Tibet, Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Ningxia, and Xinjiang. There are also 29 autonomous prefectures (a smaller unit) and 60 autonomous counties for various minorities.

The overall language policy pursued during the initial period of communist rule was a gradualist one. The Party recognized the centuries of hostility and suspicion by national minorities toward the dominant Han people, and Mao

Zedong himself publicly stated that "Han chauvinism" was to blame for this state of affairs. In addition, more than 90% of the national minorities were illiterate and many did not possess a written language.

One of the first steps taken by the new rulers was to declare that *all* ethnic groups, as well as the Han, were Chinese. This gave instant legitimacy to the national minorities and their languages. The government declared that the Han Chinese language was no longer the national language but the *common* language, for its function was to serve as a common vehicle of communication among all Chinese. In addition, a National Language Survey and Research Institute was established to assist in the development, reform, and revitalization of various minority languages. Since liberation, considerable effort has been expended on reforming written scripts, developing writing systems for those minority languages lacking them, promoting the use of minority languages in schools, and increasing publication of literary works in minority languages.

After the revolution the first definitive statement on national minorities was that of the Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference of 1949. Articles 50 and 53 of this basic document recognized that "all nationalities within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China are equal" and "shall have freedom to develop their dialects and languages." These minority rights were reaffirmed in Article 3 of the 1954 Constitution, which proclaimed the PRC as a unitary multinational state in which "All the nationalities have freedom to use and foster the growth of their spoken and written languages, to preserve or reform their own customs and ways."

Implementation of these sentiments was complicated by the fact that there are more than 50 separate and distinct language groups, most of which are significantly different from Mandarin, the most widely used language in China. The 1954 Constitution implicitly recognized the role of bilingual education as an integral part of minority education policy. The need for a common language for national communication was also stressed. The goal was for all Han living and working in minority regions to learn the local language, while all minorities would become literate in Mandarin. In this way, it was believed, legitimate minority interests would be served while the universal knowledge of Mandarin would serve to advance the goal of political unification. Among the earliest steps taken to implement these goals was the establishment in June 1951 of the Central Institute for Nationalities in Beijing to provide language

training to Han Chinese cadres and to train minority cadres to work in their native regions. By 1958 a total of eight Nationalities Institutes were in existence throughout the PRC.

The Great Leap Forward in the late 1950s was characterized by an abrupt policy change from gradualism and pluralism to one of rapid assimilation. Spoken Chinese was introduced into the schools in minority areas; many of the concessions that the minorities had enjoyed were lost; and the Beijing authorities cracked down hard on manifestations of "local nationalism." These policies led to violent clashes between Han Chinese and several national minorities, especially in the strategically important Xizang and Xinjiang provinces in the early 1960s.

Because of the threat to national security posed by disenchanted national minorities along the strategic frontier with the Soviet Union, the Chinese leadership modified the assimilationist policy just prior to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to provide for more diversity and to lessen political tensions among the minorities. However, this respite was a brief one. The onslaught of the Cultural Revolution signaled the return, once more, of the assimilationist policy. Han Red Guard groups, believing that the nationality question was, in essence, a class question, closed down the Nationality Institutes (they were not reopened until 1972) as a first step in reinstituting a hard-line policy.

Although it was widely argued during the Cultural Revolution that it was necessary for national minorities "to learn Han spoken and written language in addition to mastering their own" and that Han should, in return, learn the minority language of their locality, it was common for Red Guard groups to reimpose the learning of Mandarin on minorities because, in the eyes of many purists, national minorities should not receive "special treatment." The resulting slogan of "Eliminate national differences" was a code for sinocization. As a result, much useful work, including the laboriously compiled minority language textbooks, was destroyed in an orgy of political fanaticism from which the nation has only recently begun to recover. At a major conference on national minorities held at Qingdao in the early 1970s, minority groups were urged to learn the dominant language of the country; and Zhou Enlai, perhaps the most beloved figure in the PRC, put his personal imprimatur on the proposition that minority languages should conform "as much as possible to Han Chinese."

The arrest of the so-called "Gang of Four" in October 1976 marked the end of the Cultural Revolution. Both Mao and Zhou had recently died; and political power had passed into the hands of Deng Xiaoping, a leader who earlier had been twice purged himself, and who was firmly committed to the task of modernizing China's agriculture, industry, military, and science and technology, a movement referred to as the "Four Modernizations." This program constitutes an extraordinary agenda for the future of the PRC. In effect it is a clarion call for a "second revolution" in which education must play a key role. Since the implementation of this policy requires domestic stability, the post-Cultural Revolution period has been characterized by a return to moderation, including linguistic moderation. Efforts have been made not only to recognize minority linguistic rights but to reinstitute the use of local languages both as the medium of instruction in schools and in the mass media.

Education and the Four Modernizations

Now that China has embarked on a pragmatic effort to achieve rapid modernization, and education is seen as an important vehicle in that quest, the question of language policy is again high on the government's agenda. We know that Beijing attaches great importance to the principle of a common language binding the nation's people together, but it also is ideologically committed to preserving and expanding the linguistic rights of the national minorities. Unfortunately, however, securing reliable information on more than the bare outline of current language policy is extremely difficult. We know the 1982 Constitution of the People's Republic of China (Article 4) states that "The people of all nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages, and to preserve or reform their own ways and customs." All that can be said with any degree of confidence about the current situation is that in minority areas today education is begun in the indigenous language and instruction in the national language is added later. There appears to be no general rule as to exactly when instruction in the national language is added, and it can vary greatly depending on local conditions.

Chinese language policy under both the Guomintang and the communists has oscillated sharply depending on the political line in favor at a given time. However, whether these policies were short- or long-term, overtly assimilationist or pluralistic, they have all been designed to assimilate the minorities

into the dominant Han nation. One leading student of Chinese education has concluded that the Chinese have pursued "a policy of assimilation through 'sinocization,' or of colonization through 'dilution' ." They have adopted a form of convergence theory that resembles the old American notion of the "melting pot"; that is, in the long run both the Han majority and the various minorities will meld into a new nationality. Whether the current emphasis on industrial, military, agricultural, and scientific and technological modernization by the twenty-first century will continue to foster bilingualism remains to be seen. The pragmatic principle on which the future daily use of minority languages rests is one of how well these languages can promote China's modernization efforts. If it is demonstrated that they make a positive contribution toward this goal, they will not only survive but prosper. If they are shown to be inadequate to this task, we can expect a dramatic shift in policy.

Language Policy in Canada

There are two fundamental approaches to designing a national bilingual policy; it can be based on either the "personality principle" or the "territorial principle." The former is based on the notion that bilingualism is the official policy throughout the country, that is, a person in any part of the country may use his native tongue in all official dealings and may have his children educated in that language. The territorial principle divides a country into monolingual regions, within which the official language of the region is used for all official functions including education. Countries such as Belgium and Switzerland have opted for the territorial principle, while Canada is one of the leading proponents of the personality principle.

Language policy in Canada is both controversial and politically divisive. Of approximately 24 million Canadians, approximately 16 million (67%) are native speakers of English, while about 6 million (26%) French speakers form the largest linguistic minority. The remaining 2 million Canadians (7%) are composed of indigenous peoples and immigrants whose tongues include Ukrainian, Polish, German, Italian, and others. French is dominant in the province of Quebec, where 87% of the population uses French as their first language. About one-third of the population of New Brunswick speaks French and French speakers are scattered throughout other provinces. The most predominately Anglophone regions of Canada are Newfoundland and Labrador with 0.4% of their populations classified as non-English speakers, and British Columbia with 1.6% of the population classified as non-English speakers.

The British North America Act of 1867 gives the provincial governments primary responsibility for education. As a result, education and language policy

varies from province to province. However, the central government in Ottawa does have a degree of informal influence on local education through the Council of Ministers of Education, composed of the education ministers of the 10 provinces. The provincial authorities are free to reject policy recommendations or federal funding that has requirements that conflict with local desires. The politics of education in Canada can be very lively and complex.

A History of Language in Canada

The French were the first to colonize Canada in the early seventeenth century, introducing their language to the country. By the end of the century English encroachments on New France set the stage for a linguistic rivalry that has existed to the present time. After the Treaty of Paris in 1763 ceded the French territories to the British, the English-speaking majority began to spread over most of the country; while, with some important exceptions, most of the French-speaking minority clustered along the banks of the St. Lawrence River in what was to become the Province of Quebec. The fact that Canada was founded by the French helps explain why French-Canadians feel that their language has at least co-equal status with the English. And the "ghettoization" of French language and culture has led to both French nationalism and resentment at what they perceive to be British injustice. Exacerbating French-Canadian resentments today is the increasing heterogeneity of linguistic demography in which newer immigrants who are neither British nor French side with the Anglophone majority.

In the century preceding Canadian Confederation, French enjoyed an official status in the British territory, and Anglo-Franco relations ranged from an uneasy truce to active cooperation. The British North America Act of 1867, which still serves as Canada's Constitution, provided for a form of bilingualism and guaranteed denominational schools, which at the time were strongly associated with language, that is, Roman Catholic schools used French and Protestant schools used English.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, Canada experienced rapid expansion along with an immigration boom that brought large numbers of Europeans with various linguistic origins to the frontier in Western Canada. These immigrants generally adopted English. From around 1890 to the end of World War II, Canada's linguistic history was a virtually

unbroken series of defeats for the Francophone citizens; and French Quebec was increasingly surrounded by an Anglophone majority that embraced a melting pot philosophy.

The more recent immigration into Canada since the end of World War II has changed the socio-historical context of the nation's development. Several million immigrants have flocked into Canada since 1945, most of them urbanized and educated, to take advantage of the opportunities in an expanding economy. Unlike earlier immigrants, who settled mostly on the prairies that cover much of the western provinces, the more recent arrivals have tended to settle in major urban areas where the jobs are located.

Linguistic minorities in Canada fall into three officially recognized categories: 1) English speakers in Quebec and French speakers in the rest of the country, 2) the indigenous peoples of Canada, and 3) the large, diverse groups of immigrants from various European and Asian countries. Of these groups, bilingualism is an issue of particular import to the English in Quebec and the French outside that province. However, bilingualism in the Canadian context does not mean that most Canadians are bilingual, but merely that they are entitled to services offered by the federal government in the official language of their choice, that is, either English or French.

Quebec: The Quiet Revolution

In the 1960s the French population of Quebec grew tired of their status as a minority and, with the leadership of the Parti Quebecois, declared themselves the majority in Quebec. They secularized their society at the expense of the Catholic Church, began to agitate for more equitable treatment from the nation's English majority, and created a sense of pride in their French heritage while sparking a cultural renaissance throughout Quebec. One of the major elements of this "quiet revolution" was a rekindling of pride in their French language. One may recall General Charles De Gaulle, while on a state visit to Canada, visiting Quebec and shocking the world with a provocative speech that ended with the words "Long live free Quebec!"

In 1963 the federal government established a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism to "inquire and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal part-

nership between the two founding races, taking into account the contributions made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures to be taken to safeguard that contribution." As a result of the Royal Commission's report, the federal government passed the Official Languages Act in 1969 in which both English and French were declared official languages of co-equal status at the federal level of government. The commission's conception of a bilingual country was not one where everybody spoke both English and French, but a society in which institutions – both public and private – must by law provide all services in English and French so that monolingual speakers would be able to function in their native tongue.

On 15 November 1976 the Parti Quebecois, running on a platform of ethnic nationalism and separation from English Canada, swept the provincial elections and immediately tackled the language issue. Believing that the respective status and use of both French and English in Quebec was threatening to the majority French culture, a series of language laws was passed that culminated in the spring of 1977 with the Charter of the French Language, usually referred to as Bill 101. Aimed at maintaining and enhancing the French character of Quebec, the legislation had adverse implications for Quebec's minority English-speaking community. Under this legal framework, French was made the only *official* language of Quebec, that is, commerce and all government business was to be conducted in French. Bill 101 mandated that all children in the province attend French schools unless they can prove that at least one parent had attended an English school in the province of Quebec.

One of the major reasons for this nationalist movement was survival. The French leaders of Quebec perceived that their French culture and language were endangered. The birthrate of French Quebecois had dropped alarmingly, and the province's poor economic performance caused many young French speakers to emigrate to other parts of Canada or the United States, where they needed to learn English. Attempts were made to lure industry from other parts of Canada and the United States, which meant that those people moving into Quebec would be English speakers and would further dilute the use of French. Something dramatic was needed to reverse this trend, and Parti Quebecois was the vehicle chosen for this task.

In 1984 the provincial government adjusted the law to allow the same rights to those coming from a province that provides French-language education rights that are equal to the English services provided by Quebec. In practice, only

New Brunswick and Ontario qualify. Despite this adjustment, Bill 101 has been challenged in the courts; and a definitive decision has yet to be handed down by the Canadian Supreme Court. Clause 23 of the 1981 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (officially part of the constitutional framework for education in Canada) seems to suggest that Bill 101 is unconstitutional.

In some important ways the Quebec model has been counterproductive. The language restrictions designed to preserve the province's French character have hampered Quebec's economic development. Business often tends to view the severe restrictions on access to English schools as a disincentive for investment in Quebec. However, nationalism sometimes takes a back seat to economic pragmatism; and the provincial government will grant special dispensations to investors. For example, in an attempt to lure Bell Helicopter to establish a plant near Montreal, the provincial government offered to make the children of executives and technicians working for Bell "honorary English Quebecers" to whom the language restrictions on education would not apply.

Significant numbers of French-speaking parents oppose Bill 101 on the ground that their children are not getting a fair deal. Survey data show that many French-speaking Quebecois want their children to retain French, but they also want them to learn English. Despite the official bilingual policy of Canada, English is and probably will remain the dominant language of the country; and French-speaking parents recognize that English is the language of work, status, and geographical mobility.

However, the provincial government believes that it is a mistake to expose students to English at too early an age. French-speaking children are not allowed to attend English schools, nor are they taught a single word of English until they reach the fourth grade. This does not mean that they learn no English, for they pick some up on the street and from watching Canadian and U.S. television and movies.

A handful of French-language schools ignore the language rule and begin teaching English in the first grade. In other cases some English schools bend the rules and enroll students who technically should not be enrolled. Many of these are children of European immigrants who perceive the utility of English. One observer estimates that there are about 1,500 "illegal students" in the Montreal area schools.

While French-language students are not allowed to study English until grade four, many English-language students are enrolled in French immersion programs, where they take classes in both English and French. The irony of Quebec's language policy is that it produces bilingual students in the English community and monolingual students in the French community. The unintended consequences of such a policy often are not recognized by the Quebec authorities.

One of the interesting unintended consequences of the federal government's attempts to alleviate the often legitimate grievances of the French-speaking minority is the creation of a related problem in Western Canada. Many groups in these prairie provinces, proud of their own non-English and non-French ethnic heritage, resent the establishment of French programs in their schools and are demanding equal rights for other languages. They argue that because there are more German and Ukrainian speakers than French speakers in the west, and because the west does not share the same history and tradition as Eastern Canada, the western provinces should be characterized by the unique multicultural, multilingual, and multiracial background of their history. This position also is related to a general western disenchantment with Canada's "Eastern establishment."

Pedagogical Dimensions of Bilingual Education

Canadian educators and bureaucrats recognize four basic organizational patterns for language education: English schools for children of the Anglophone community, in which French is often offered as a normal elective; French schools for Francophone children (most commonly in Quebec), in which English is offered as a foreign language elective; "mixed" schools where "official language" minority children (either English or French, but usually the latter) attend some classes in their native tongue; and the "immersion" schools, in which Anglophone children receive more than half of their schooling in French.

Research on the effectiveness of these patterns is inconclusive, but a brief discussion of the immersion approach may be useful. The most famous early immersion program is probably the St. Lambert project, which began in 1965 and was designed to produce high-level competence in French and English in native English speakers. Students in this project study entirely in French until grade two, when they study English for approximately one hour per day.

The amount of time devoted to English increases with each succeeding year until grade six, when English is used as the medium of instruction more than half of the time. Although lack of space precludes a detailed discussion of the results, it is fair to say that the program has been a success; and a number of programs modeled on the St. Lambert project have been established in cities throughout Canada.

In addition to the early immersion approach, several other programs have produced generally favorable results. Among these are the early-grade partial immersion program and the later-grade partial immersion program. All of these programs are designed to help English speakers learn French. Similar programs for Francophones are rare except in the private sector. All of this is evidence that Canada has faced up to her minority linguistic problem. Although Canada has a long way to go, it has begun its journey.

Lessons for the United States

When we study foreign education, we invariably begin to see our own system of education from a different perspective. We can step back from our own society and begin to see that the general picture looks quite different. As the late George Bereday wrote, "People wrestle with foreign ways to learn about their own roots, to atomize and thus to understand the matrix of their own educational heritage." As suggested throughout this fastback, bilingual education is neither new nor restricted to the U.S. experience. That being the case, what can we learn from studying bilingualism and bilingual education in the Soviet Union, China, and Canada?

First, we can begin to see that our own attempts at bilingual education have been motivated less by educational reasons than by political imperatives. Indeed, bilingual education always has been used as a tool with which to achieve political ends. We must realize that there is nothing inherently wrong in this. Education has been used throughout our history as a political-economic vehicle, whether it be the common school as a means of political integration or the land-grant college as a means of promoting better agriculture. Bilingual education in other societies also has been political in nature. Once we recognize the political nature of bilingual education, we are better able to understand the true nature of the debate.

Second, by studying both our own history of bilingual education and that of others, we will understand that the concept is not a radical new idea that has not been tried before but has a very long history. We all are at least a bit wary of change; but to understand that earlier generations of Americans have actually had bilingual schools in Cincinnati and Baltimore or that simi-

lar schools existed in Canada in the nineteenth century enables us to consider the desirability of various bilingual options with a more open mind. When we understand that 130 different language groups exist in the Soviet Union or that between 56 and 400 minorities, depending on how one counts, are found in the People's Republic of China, our linguistic situation seems a bit more manageable.

Third, we often read of our poor record in treating linguistic minorities, especially when compared to that of the Soviet Union or China. Unless we are better informed about both the considerable successes and the important failures of the Soviets and Chinese, we will be ill-equipped to understand why programs may succeed or fail.

Finally, although we cannot directly transplant or borrow foreign pedagogical policies or practices, we can learn from them. The best example of this is probably Japan. At least since the eighth century, and especially during the first decades of the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912) and again during the American Occupation (1945-1953), Japan *selectively* decided what was worth importing from the West and, rather than tear it out of its natural context and replant it in Japan, proceeded to analyze and understand Western ideas and adapt them to the Japanese environment. This is a skill that Americans need to develop if we are to profit from the successes and mistakes of others; and the social laboratories of bilingual education in the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and Canada are an excellent place to begin.

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